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Labour Market News

CENTRAL ALBERTA

Alberta Employment and Immigration

JOB SEEKERS

Self employment

Be your own boss

Would you like to be your own boss? If you said yes, you're not alone. A growing number of people are turning their self-employment dreams into reality. In 2005, an estimated 2.5 million Canadians, or 15.5 per cent of workers, were self-employed.

For those with a great idea, a plan, commitment and lots of energy, there are plenty of opportunities to become a successful entrepreneur.

"Any time is a good time to start your own business. Even in a declining economy there is always a need. You just have to find out what your passion is, find a niche and work on it," says Tanya Kitchen, a business analyst and loan officer at the Red Deer Centre for Business Development. The centre is part of the Community Futures network, a federal program which offers training and financing for entrepreneurs.

Do you have what it takes?

There are many advantages and rewards to being self-employed, but there are many challenges to consider as well. Are you prepared to work long hours? Can you handle stress? Are you willing to risk your own money or go into debt?

Look at all the angles before taking the plunge. A good guide is the *Self-Employment: Is it for me?* booklet published by Alberta Employment and Immigration (E&I) (www.alis.gov.ab.ca/pdf/cshop/Self-Employment.pdf).

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There are many resources in the Central Alberta region to help aspiring entrepreneurs start their own business. See page 2 for website links.

Going green can help businesses build employee loyalty and respect.

EMPLOYERS

Going green to attract and retain employees

There are plenty of great reasons for companies to go green. Not only is it good for the environment, but green initiatives can help companies save money by reducing energy costs. Going green can also help companies attract consumers who want to buy eco-friendly products.

And increasingly, forward-thinking companies are using their green activities as an effective employee recruitment and retention tool.

"(Workplace) greening and sustainability programs are becoming a huge attraction for more employees, especially younger employees," says Jennifer Hedayat, sustainability coordinator for the Western Canada offices of Amec. Amec is a global project management, engineering and consultancy firm with offices across Alberta, including a branch in Red Deer. On the company's online career section, a message from the company president informs potential employees about the company's environmental record, among other benefits.

Hedayat says many people today are taking steps in their personal lives to be environmentally friendly, and they want their employer to share their values.

"People are more interested in what companies are doing to address (environmental issues) and they want to see that companies are walking the talk," she says.

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See page 7 for a related Best Practice story.

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Find us online at WWW.EMPLOYMENT.ALBERTA.CA/CENTRAL

NEXT ISSUE...
Carpentry trades
Finding child care

JOB SEEKER FEATURE STORY

Planning and research are key to success

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There are also many online questionnaires that can help you make a decision (the Business Development Bank of Canada offers one at www.potentielentrepreneur.ca).

Getting started

If you've decided self-employment works for you, it's important to continue your research. One of the first things you'll need to decide, of course, is what kind of business you want to start. You could buy a franchise, buy an existing business or start from the ground up. You could fulfill a need that's not being met for a product or service, or turn a skill, talent or hobby into a career. You could work from home, start an online business or open a store.

Arron Severson, who lives in Didsbury, started Arron's Bobcat two years ago when he couldn't find a company to do some construction work around his house.

"I thought 'I've been running a bobcat for 22 years, I might as well own one.' So I bought my own equipment, did the work around my house and people started coming to me asking me to do work," says Severson.

Whatever you decide, make sure it's something you'll enjoy doing. "I don't think money can be your main objective," says Rosella Brown, who owns Grapevine Bed and Breakfast near Rocky Mountain House. "You have to love what you're doing first of all. If you don't make any money at first, there will be some kind of satisfaction there that you're building something. You've got to look at the long term."

> "You have to love what you're doing first of all."
>
> - Local entrepreneur

Business planning

Developing a business plan is an important step in the start-up of any business. In fact, some lending agencies won't even consider a loan application unless the entrepreneur has a business plan.

"It helps them realize whether their business idea is viable," says Kitchen, with Community Futures. "If they do a really good business plan they will know how much money they need to start the business and how much they need to borrow. Also, when you go through a full business plan you find out who your customers are and who your competition is. To qualify for a loan, we require them to do some market research to back their plan up."

There are many government agencies and business organizations which offer business counseling, workshops and seminars for aspiring entrepreneurs, and it's often free (see sidebar at top right for some options).

E&I offers a Self-Employment Program for Albertans who are unemployed and in need of self-employment training. Business plan development, one-on-one business counseling, coaching and follow-up are provided. For details, visit employment.alberta.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/3156.html or call your local Labour Market Information Centre (see page 9 for locations).

Financing

One of the biggest obstacles to self-employment is often financing. Many people use their own savings or ask their friends or family to invest in their venture. Another option is to get a loan, but it can be difficult to get a business loan from a conventional bank. However, there are a number of publicly-funded agencies and business organizations that provide high-risk financing for entrepreneurs with great ideas (see sidebar above for some options).

Find a mentor

You probably still have lots of questions and local entrepreneurs can be a great source of answers.

"Find people who are experts, not necessarily in your field. Take them for coffee. Ask them questions. 'What did you do when you started? Where did you go for this help?' We've found that most successful business people have been helped along the way and they're more than willing to sit and talk with someone," Kitchen says.

Following your self-employment dreams isn't an easy road to travel, but for many entrepreneurs, the rewards make all the hard work worthwhile. See pages 3 and 4 for profiles of local entrepreneurs.

ONLINE HELP A CLICK AWAY

Below is a just a sample of the many online resources available to help entrepreneurs get started:

- ☑ Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (www.afsc.ca) - Small business loans.
- ☑ Business Development Bank of Canada (www.bdc.com) - Financing and support services for small and medium-sized businesses and entrepreneurs.
- ☑ Community Futures Central Alberta (www.rdcbd.com) and Community Futures East Parkland (www.eastparkland.com) - Financing, counseling and support services for entrepreneurs for West Central and East Central Alberta.
- ☑ The Business Link (www.canadabusiness.ca/alberta/) - Resources for entrepreneurs and small business owners, including aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, women, youth and people living in rural communities.
- ☑ Canadian Youth Business Foundation (www.cybf.ca) - Loans for entrepreneurs aged 18 to 34.
- ☑ Alberta Women Entrepreneurs (www.awebusiness.com) - Loans and support services for women.
- ☑ Alberta Indian Investment Corporation (www.aiicbusiness.org) - Loans and support services for First Nations entrepreneurs.
- ☑ Apeetogosan Métis Development Inc. (www.apeetogosan.ab.ca) - Loans and support services for Metis entrepreneurs.
- ☑ WorkinkAlberta (www.workink.com) - Resources for entrepreneurs with disabilities.

PROFILE: DWAYNE GAUTHIER

RESTAURANT 27

Business overview

Dwayne Gauthier and his brother Darren own Urban Lawn and Landscape and Restaurant 27, a fine dining restaurant in Red Deer. Dwayne is the head chef and Darren is the restaurant's manager.

What inspired you to start your own business?

After working several years in the oilfield, Darren and I started a landscaping company in March 2006. We were quite lucky—we had 10 full-time employees within the first year. Still, it was always my dream to open a restaurant. I have a background in culinary arts and was a chef before working in the oilfield.

How did you get started?

We financed the landscaping company ourselves. When we decided to open the restaurant, we went to our bank for a loan, but banks aren't overly excited about investing in restaurants. The bank put us in touch with Community Futures, which provides high risk loans to entrepreneurs. I wrote a 30-page business plan to prove to them we could make a go of it. They approved the loan and we put our homes and landscape business up as collateral. It was a big risk.

Brothers Dwayne and Darren Gauthier.

Did you have any challenges getting started?

When we first opened Restaurant 27 in January 2008, it was a struggle. After six months, we almost gave up. We just turned our first profit in December. You have to be completely passionate about what you do and be willing to put in the hours. You have to be willing to put it all on the line.

What is it like to be your own boss?

The hours are long. Some days I start at 6 a.m. doing snow removal, then work at the restaurant from 1 p.m. to 11 p.m. It can be stressful, but at the end of the day you're not answering to anybody but yourself. It's good to know that the harder you work and the more you put into it, you can reap the benefits.

How do you attract customers?

We gave free samples to potential customers, handed out coupons, gave cooking demonstrations at the mall and attended food and wine festivals. Our reputation has grown and we're looking at moving to a new location and expanding from a 45-seat restaurant to a 135-seat restaurant and lounge.

What advice do you have for other aspiring entrepreneurs?

Find something that nobody else is doing, or do something better than others are doing. We're doing something unique in Red Deer—casual fine dining using locally grown meat and produce. Have a dream but be smart about it. We've learned that even if you're going to finance it yourself, do a business plan and see if its viable. Sit down and look at the numbers.

PROFILE: LORNA ORLICK

FAMILY DAY HOME

Business overview

Lorna Orlick is an approved family day home operator. She provides care for six children from her home in Stettler.

What inspired you to start your own business?

I took an early childhood education program many years ago. I worked in day cares as well as institutions and group homes for disabled children. When I decided to start a family of my own, I wanted to stay home with my children. After my daughter was born, I looked into operating a family day home. My plan was to do it until my children went to school and then look for a job. But 12 years later I'm still enjoying it. It's been the best thing I've done in my life.

How did you get started?

There were no start-up costs. My family day home agency provided me with equipment such as high chairs, strollers, playpens and baby gates. I already had a house full of toys.

Did you have any challenges getting started?

I've operated family day homes in Manning, Olds and Stettler. The biggest challenge was being new in town. When you're new, people haven't got a clue who you are or what you can offer them. People have to be able to trust who you are when you've got their precious children. You have to do a lot of work to reassure them.

What is it like to be your own boss?

I'm home for my own children in the morning and after school. I don't have to go out and spend a bundle on clothes because they're only going to get spit on or drooled on. I have no commute, no rushing to get everybody out of the house. You do have a lot of freedom. There is no stress for me at all.

"Find something you are passionate about."

How do you attract customers?

The local family day home agency refers the parents to me. I have an interview process with the parents to see if there is a connection between us. Once you get established then it's word-of-mouth and you have a waiting list coming out your ears.

What advice do you have for other aspiring entrepreneurs?

Do what you feel is the best for you. Find something that you are passionate about. Success will come because you're happy doing what you're doing.

PROFILE: BARB MAJA

PAWS-ITIVELY FUN K9'S

Business overview

Barb Maja operates a dog training and grooming business from her family's home in Olds. She also offers agility classes.

What inspired you to start your own business?

I was an insurance agent in Fort Saskatchewan for 13 years. I wasn't getting the rate of pay or recognition that I thought I deserved and I just got fed up. I had always wanted to start a business and I saw a need for dog services in the community. Dogs are my passion. I started by teaching agility classes part-time. After a while I decided to venture out on my own and start a doggy day care. I went on a whim and quit my job.

How did you get started?

I had family that helped me with the money, so I didn't have to go to the bank. There weren't a lot of start-up costs. I just had to paint, my husband built the fences and my rent was low. Still, when you start a new business, it's going to hurt financially. You're not taking in a regular paycheque anymore.

Barb Maja and her dog Annie.

Did you have any challenges getting started?

It was stressful for sure and I had difficulties with a potential business partner. I decided to go it on my own and everything just fell into place. The business took off. I made money right away and I was never in the hole.

What is it like to be your own boss?

I wanted to work part-time and be able to set my own hours, since I had two young children. I ended up working way more than part-time. I sold the doggy day care and our family moved to Olds. Then I started another business, Paws-itively Fun K9's. I groom in the day and teach classes at night. It has worked out perfectly for me, although due to medical reasons I have to cut back on the grooming. I will continue to do training and agility classes.

How do you attract customers?

Advertising cost me a lot of money—that's where all my money went at the beginning. You have to get your name out there to start. The business has taken off and now, my customers come through word-of-mouth.

What advice do you have for other aspiring entrepreneurs?

You have to believe in what you sell. Do your research and find a niche. If you can find an idea that is a necessity, you will always have work. Think of something that people need and fill that need.

PROFILE: SCOTT HARLEY

NO FRET MUSIC

Business overview

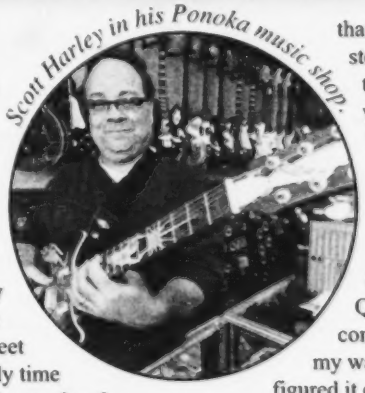
Scott Harley runs a store in downtown Ponoka, selling musical instruments and accessories. He also does guitar repairs for local musicians.

What inspired you to start your own business?

I've been teaching myself guitar, singing and playing drums for years. We had a music store in town and it closed a few years ago. I was lamenting having to go to Edmonton or Red Deer to get strings and supplies, as were other musicians. So I decided to open my store. I'm just trying to meet the needs of the musicians in the community.

How did you get started?

I had an idea and went with it. I used my personal savings for start-up costs and opened my shop in July 2007. I have a Mastercard for the business, which I'm constantly using and replenishing. I'm not making enough money to just work here, so I continue to work as a psychiatric nurse at the Centennial Centre for Mental Health and Brain Injury. Right now, the store is more a passion than it is profitable.



Scott Harley in his Ponoka music shop.

Did you have any challenges getting started?

Money has constantly been a challenge for sure—trying to make ends meet and pay the bills. The only time I've actually paid myself was when I depleted my own personal bank account so much I had to pay myself so I could pay my mortgage. Most small businesses take a while to get going. In the long-term I'm hoping it will be worth it. Another challenge has been finding the right location. I've moved three times since I started.

What is it like to be your own boss?

The one major downfall is the extra hours, but I expected that. I work more than full-time at the store and part-time at the hospital. But the worst part is I'm not much of a bookkeeper. I've got a stack of papers here and I'm not highly motivated in that regards. I put QuickBooks on my computer and stumbled my way through until I figured it out.

How do you attract customers?

I've placed a few ads in the newspaper and did a radio spot, but it's mostly word-of-mouth.

What advice do you have for other aspiring entrepreneurs?

Make sure you pick something that is viable and has good potential for income. But that being said, it's also important to enjoy what you do. It's a good thing that I like what I do, because so far it hasn't made me a lot of money.

Times **have** changed ...

Tips for recession proofing your career

TIPS FOR EMPLOYEES **work it out**

It's hard to believe that the economy can turn around so quickly; that companies that once fought so hard to hire people are now laying them off. We all want to believe that our jobs are secure, but there are no guarantees in a slowing economy.

When people lose their jobs it can be a shock. But it is even more shocking if you are not prepared for the loss of income or self-esteem that can accompany a serious life change.

It makes good sense to be prepared for a layoff. While Alberta still has a low unemployment rate, it's smart to be proactive when it comes to protecting your lifestyle.

The one thing we all should be doing, regardless of the economy, is saving an emergency fund. It will help get us through the hard times without making any major life changes.

Career experts say to save between three and six months worth of living expenses. This will also help keep credit card debt down.

Assess your skills

There are strategies you can take to help keep your job secure and to build your skills and reputation.

First take a good look at your weaknesses and do whatever you can to improve them. Today's employers are looking for hard workers with positive attitudes, people who are open to change and are willing to expand their knowledge. Find out how you can meet their needs even if it means investing more time and energy in your career.

Visit your local library's career section or visit career-themed websites for information on developing skills and looking for new career paths. A good website to explore is the Alberta Learning Information Service at www.alis.alberta.ca.

Career employment consultants at your local Labour Market Information Centre (see page 9 for locations) can also provide free career planning and training advice.

Upgrade your training

Invest in training. Take courses or tackle an unfinished diploma or degree. You can also take a look at other skills that are needed in your workplace and develop them so you are able to show off your newfound skills. Your boss will notice and it will make you more valuable to the company. At the same time, it builds your resumé—one that will become more appealing to other employers as your list of skills grows.

Now is not the time to be slacking at work. Show your boss you're invaluable: show up on time, work hard and have a positive attitude.

Update your resumé

Always keep your resume up-to-date and ready to be sent at a moment's notice. If necessary, prepare more than one version to highlight different skill sets.

Network

Don't get complacent, even when you are in a great position. Keep your ears open to new opportunities and keep your networking skills sharp. In a recent article in the *Globe and Mail*, (Job hunting 101: A guide for the new realities of these tougher times) career coach Wayne Pagani of WP Consulting Associates in Ottawa says to "network aggressively and expand contacts far and wide." He also suggests posting your resumé to industry-specific websites as today's employers use them to identify potential candidates.

Do some research

Career experts also agree that it is best to start looking for new prospects as soon as you get the first inkling that you might lose your job. Research job ads to find out what employers are looking for and do everything you can to build on those skills. Also, think about how your current skills can fit into other organizations.

If the unexpected happens and you lose your job, you'll be prepared to continue your job search without any added stress.

Coming events in Central Alberta

COMPUTER SKILLS WORKSHOP FOR ONLINE JOB SEARCHES

Learn basic Internet job search skills at a free workshop March 23 at the Red Deer Canada-Alberta Service Centre (2nd Floor First Red Deer Place, 4911 - 51 St.). The workshop runs from 8:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. To register or for details call 403-781-7811 or 403-340-5353.

CENTRAL ALBERTA JOB FAIR MARCH 25

The Central Alberta Job Fair will be held Wednesday March 25th at the Westerner Park in Red Deer. The fair runs 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Parking and admission are free.

MATURE WORKER FORUM

This free forum can help anyone 45+ make a career transition or start their job search. To register, go online to www.centralalberta.ab.ca and click on Training and Events, or call Marilyn at 403-340-4342. The forum will be held in the Trailblazer Room in the Westerner Park between 8:30 a.m. and 12:00 on Wednesday March 28.

JOB SEEKERS

Trades Expo set for May 6 at Westerner Park

Central Alberta's Trades Expo will feature up to 60 interactive displays providing students with the opportunity to experience first-hand as many as 50 of Alberta's registered trades and designated occupations.

Held in conjunction with Career Expo, the Trades Expo gives students a chance to explore different career options. It is timed to allow students to enrol in the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) for the coming year or to make summer employment contacts.

Skilled trades people continue to be in high demand across Canada and the demand is forecast to continue.

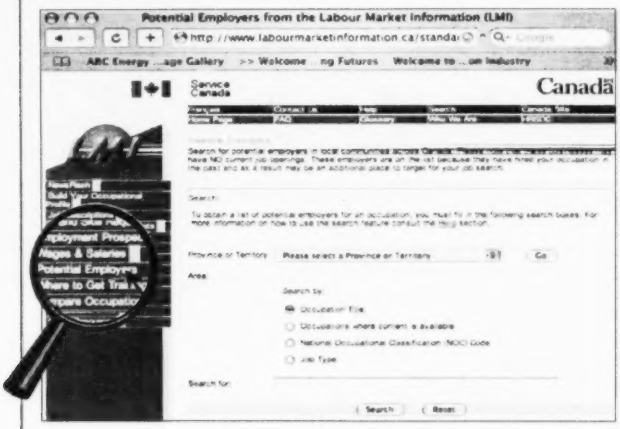
The Trades Expo runs from 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the Stockman's Pavilion at Westerner Park in Red Deer. Admission is free. For more information, go online to www.tradesexpo.ca.

The event is funded and organized by Central Alberta employers; Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training, Alberta Employment and Immigration, the Government of Canada, CAREERS: The Next Generation, Central Alberta Career Prep and the Central Alberta Economic Partnership.

Find potential employers online

On the www.labourmarketinformation.ca website, you can search a database of employers who have recently posted job ads on the Canada-Alberta Job Bank (www.jobbank.gc.ca) and who may be hiring.

1. Go online to www.labourmarketinformation.ca.
2. Click on the Potential Employers link (see below)
3. Narrow down the search by selecting a province or territory, then a geographic area.
4. Choose to search by occupation title; occupations where content is available; National Occupational Classification (NOC) Code or job type.
5. Click on the relevant job to see employers from the region who have recently posted employment ads to the Canada-Alberta Job Bank.



Internet job boards like the Job Bank (www.jobbank.gc.ca) are powerful tools. With a few clicks, a job hunter can search any region of Canada for a particular job category, and even search for employers who've posted ads in the past. Job Bank also has advice on writing a resumé, tips for the job search, advice for finding unadvertised positions, information on self-employment, and notes on finding work in non-profit organizations. With computers and the Internet, job hunters can even automate parts of their job hunt.

With **Job Alert**, any job that matches one of three possible profiles will be automatically emailed to users.

Job Match allows a user to create profiles that will be automatically shown to employers searching for new workers

See page 9 for other job boards and more resources for employees.

Meet employers in person: Connections

Once a week Red Deer's Labour Market Information Centre hosts Employer Connections where a single employer will be available to sit down and explain their labour needs. It's an opportunity for job seekers to speak directly with the people who can best explain a job and a career. Find out about upcoming Employer Connections at employment.alberta.ca/central where there are links to two-page summaries of employers' presentations.

This website also has useful information on upcoming job fairs and events, links to previous editions of the Labour Market News, and links to Finding Work In ..., a monthly publication giving practical advice about finding work in different industries.

EMPLOYERS

For employers, the Job Bank offers a simple and free way of posting job ads right across the country, while the website's **Job Match** function allows employers to immediately search a database of resumés. The site also has hundreds of well organized links and articles that explain every stage in the hiring process. To post a job ad visit www.jobbank.gc.ca.

A green philosophy

Sunworks' good work earns employee loyalty

Best Practice FOR EMPLOYERS

It's not the company's "green" philosophy that first attracts job seekers to Sunworks, a gift shop located in downtown Red Deer.

It's usually the store's selection of unique kitchen, home and garden products that entices them to apply for employment when a position opens up.

But once they start working at the store, employees are always impressed with the efforts that owners Paul Harris and Terry Warke have undertaken to be environmentally responsible.

It may be one reason why employees at Sunworks tend to stick around for the long term—a rarity in retail, particularly over the past few years.

"We have five to seven employees, depending on the season," says Harris. "There is not much employee turnover. (Our green philosophy) has possibly helped with retention—I think it's important to employees. Staff also like the atmosphere of the store, the way we work together."

Environmental causes

Sunworks opened in 1997 with a mission to provide personalized service and an eclectic mix of products. Another goal was to demonstrate environmental responsibility and philanthropic leadership.

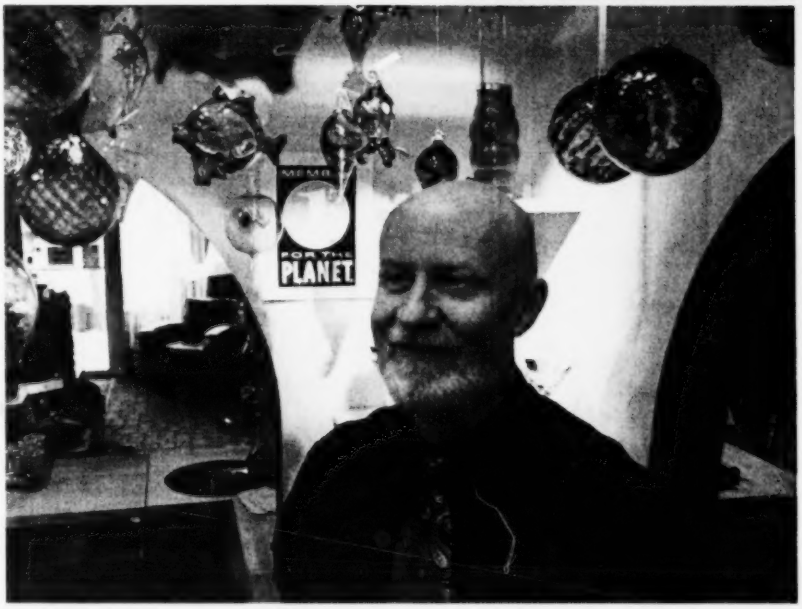
The owners have put their words into action.

"We buy wind power. We re-insulated our entire building and installed new windows to bring down the cost of utilities," notes Harris.

Two years ago, Sunworks also joined a group called 1% For the Planet, a global alliance of businesses who donate one per cent of their annual gross revenues to environmental causes.

Sunworks donates its share to the Red Deer and District Community Foundation's Environmental Legacy Fund. The new legacy fund, once it grows large enough, will support environmental initiatives across Central Alberta.

Following the owners' example, the store's employees have also been inspired to take action.



Sunworks owners Paul Harris (above) and Terry Warke donate one per cent of their annual gross profits to an environmental legacy fund.

"Certainly, employees look at ways to make the store more environmentally friendly," says Harris.

Recently, staff were behind a move to improve recycling at the store. Most of the cardboard boxes the store receives were being thrown away.

"We had no way to recycle things except to put it in a car and drive it up to the city's recycle bins," says Harris.

A retail store collects a lot of cardboard, and that required a lot of trips to the recycle depot. Looking for an easier alternative, Sunworks worked with a neighbouring business, which agreed to put a recycling bin on its property. The two stores share the cost of the bin. Problem solved.

Eco-conscious staff

Sales clerk Heather Christenson is one of the employees who worked on the recycling initiative.

"I've been concerned about the environment since my kids were born, and they're 21 and 19 now. They call me granola mom," says Christenson.

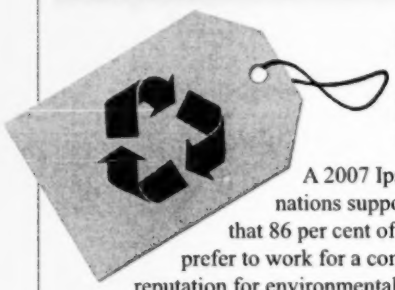
She's been with Sunworks for five years and appreciates that her employer shares her values when it comes to being eco-conscious. "If I'm in a work environment that doesn't value that, then it goes against the grain of my being. It's very important that I see that reflection (in my employer)," she says.

She likes that the store also makes it easy for employees to lessen their environmental impact, by doing small things like providing a water cooler (so they don't have to buy bottled water) and a lunch room (so they don't have to buy takeout served in throw-away containers).

Harris believes its important that businesses—a big contributor of green house gas emissions and landfill waste—consider their environmental footprint. They can start with small initiatives, such as recycling, and from there the sky's the limit.

In the end, it can not only save them money and help the environment, it can be a big boost to employee loyalty—especially at a time when the environment is a growing concern.

EMPLOYERS



Going green

Continued from page 1

A 2007 Ipsos Mori survey of 15 nations supports this view—it found that 86 per cent of Canadians "would prefer to work for a company that has a good reputation for environmental responsibility."

Amec has a safety, health and environmental policy. Eco-volunteering is encouraged—staff across the globe have participated in tree planting, coastal clean-ups and Earth Hour. Last fall, employees in the Calgary office took part in a bike challenge: the company paid $500 to staff who biked a minimum of 500 kilometres to work over a 12-week period.

"We had 33 people take part and 23 completed the 500 km. It really engaged a lot of people. They were really excited to see the company support something like that," says Hedayat.

Many green initiatives are easy and affordable for employers to implement (see sidebar at right for some ideas).

When it comes to recruitment and retention, being green can give companies a competitive edge. It can influence potential employees looking to work for a company with a green record and it can build long-term loyalty in employees who are proud to be a part of their company's green activities.

Tips for employers: Easy ways to be green

- Provide bins to recycle paper and plastic or glass bottles.
- Turn down the temperature in your warehouse or office and install programmable thermostats.
- Use energy-efficient lights.
- Ask staff to shut off their computers at night.
- Go paperless if possible: Review documents on computer screens, file documents on computer, send e-mails instead of paper letters and send faxes through the computer.
- Buy recycled paper and print on both sides.
- Buy in bulk to reduce shipping and packaging waste.
- Encourage staff to carpool, take public transit, bike or walk to work.
- Provide green benefits: give a bonus to workers who bike or carpool to work, or those who use public transit or hybrid cars; allow employees to work from home or work consolidated work weeks (four 10-hour days instead of five eight-hour days) so they can use less gas and reduce their carbon footprint.
- Use green materials (i.e. biodegradable soaps, cloth towels in the bathroom, refillable pens).
- If you have a fleet, buy fuel-efficient vehicles.
- Buy EnergyStar office equipment and staff room appliances.
- Sign up for the David Suzuki Foundation's Nature Challenge at Work (www.davidsuzuki.org/NatureChallenge/at_Work). A toolkit is available to download that provides tips for employers and employees on how to build a greener workplace.

FOR A BEST PRACTICE STORY ON A COMPANY WITH A GREEN PHILOSOPHY, SEE PAGE 7.

EMPLOYER

Resources

Both federal and provincial governments have practical programs to help meet the current needs of employers. Here are a few programs that can be of assistance to business.

Information sources

The Labour Market Information page on the Alberta Employment and Immigration (E&I) website offers links to labour force statistics, forecasts, and wage and salary information. (employment.alberta.ca/lmi)

- The Central Alberta Economic Partnership (CAEP) website (www.centralalberta.ab.ca) has hundreds of links to information sources and programs including:
- Support for Training Workers
- Wage Subsidy Programs
- Recruiting Employees
- Employment Services in Central Alberta
- Foreign Worker Employer Guide

Seminars and networking

Employer Connections are held every Wednesday at the Labour Market Information Centre, 2nd Floor, First Red Deer Place, 4911-51 St. (across from the Provincial Building).

The meetings are an opportunity to meet job seekers, employment agencies and career counsellors.

Each week a single employer is showcased and presents their current job opportunities. To participate free of charge call 403-340-4342 and ask for a Business and Industry Liaison.

Labour solutions

- Red Deer Aboriginal Employment Services. Ph. 403-358-7734
- Métis Employment Services. Ph. 403-342-6636
- Career Assistance Network (www.rdcan.ca) teams unemployed workers with employers. Ph. 403-341-7811
- Employment Placement Support Services supports adults over 25, and persons with disabilities age 18 and over. Ph. 403-343-6249
- Employment Access offers employment programs for clients with disabilities. Ph. 403-341-2363
- DRES provides support and assistance to employers hiring people with disabilities. Contact the Canada-Alberta Service Centre in Red Deer. Ph. 403-340-5353

Personalized help when needed

There are dozens of programs available to employers. E&I employees will visit the workplace and provide a summary of options and opportunities. For example, they can direct managers to initiatives that will help their business, and workforce adjustment teams are available to help employees find new work if they are laid off.

For more information call 403-340-4342 and ask for a Business and Industry Liaison.

Sign up free: We're live and online

In the News, an electronic digest about regional business expansions, relocations and closures, and *Finding Work In*, which profiles different career opportunities, are available online at employment.alberta.ca/central. A free subscription service will notify you by e-mail when the latest edition of each product comes out.

On the same web page there are *Labour Market News* products for Stettler, Wetaskiwin, Vermillion and Wainwright.

JOB SEEKER Resources

There are many resources in the central region that can be helpful to job seekers and workers alike.

Where to find us

This publication, In the News, (an electronic digest about regional business expansions, relocations and closures) and Finding Work In, which profiles different career opportunities, are available online at employment.alberta.ca/central.

A free subscription service will notify you by e-mail when the latest edition of each product comes out.

Job search and career websites

- www.jobbank.gc.ca **(Job listings, links and other services)**
- www.alis.gov.ab.ca **(Alberta Learning Information Service)**
- www.workopolis.ca **(Job listings)**
- www.monster.ca **(Job listings)**
- www.nextsteps.org **(Job resources for youth)**
- www.albertajobs.com **(Job listings)**
- www.hgcareers.com **(Job listings)**
- www.healthjobs.ab.ca **(Health care job listings)**

Job search and career information by phone

Alberta Career Information Hotline:

1-800-661-3753

Fax: (780) 422-0372 TDD: (780) 422-5283

Resumé review service

The Government of Alberta e-Resumé Review Service is a great way to have a resumé reviewed and improved, before sending it to employers.

To access the service, log on to www.alis.gov.ab.ca/hotline/resume and follow the instructions to send your resumé for review.

The service is free to residents of Alberta and those seeking work in Alberta.

Resources for labour market information

These websites offer a wealth of labour market information on Alberta and specific communities.

- employment.alberta.ca/lmi **(Alberta Employment and Immigration)**
- www.alis.gov.ab.ca **(Alberta Learning Information Service)**
- www.albertafirst.com **(Business and economic information)**
- www.centralalberta.ab.ca **(Central Alberta Economic Partnership)**
- www.alis.gov.ab.ca/employment/lmi/alberta.asp) **(Labour market information across Alberta)**
- www.labourmarketinformation.ca **(Service Canada)**

Seminars and networking

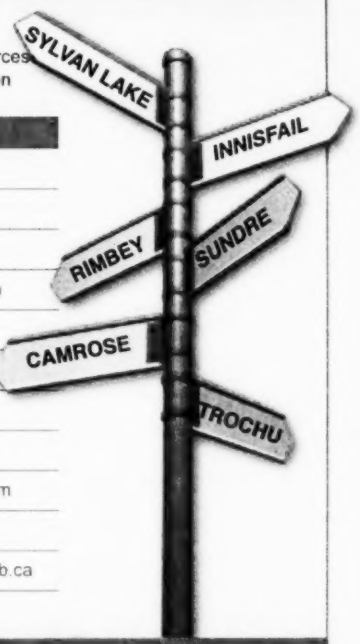
Employer Connections are held every Wednesday at the Labour Market Information Centre, 2nd Floor, First Red Deer Place, 4911-51 St. across from the Provincial Building.

The meetings are an opportunity to meet employers face to face.

New to Central Alberta?

See past issues of the Labour Market News (employment.alberta.ca/central) for employment, social services, health care, transportation and other great resources available in your community. Information is also available on municipal websites (see links below).

City / Town	Month
Camrose	www.camrose.com
Didsbury	www.didsbury.ca
Drayton Valley	www.draytonvalley.ca
Innisfail	www.townofinnisfail.com
Lacombe	www.lacombe.ca
Olds	www.town.olds.ab.ca
Ponoka	www.ponoka.org
Red Deer	www.city.red-deer.ab.ca
Rocky Mountain House	www.rockymtnhouse.com
Stettler	www.stettler.net
Sylvan Lake	www.town.sylvan-lake.ab.ca
Wetaskiwin	www.wetaskiwin.ca



LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION CENTRES

Labour Market Information Centres (LMIC's) provide information to help you make career, learning and work decisions. LMICs have books, magazines, newspapers, software and videos about employment-related topics.

There are LMIC's across Alberta. For a complete list, see: employment.alberta.ca/lmic.

LMIC's in Central Alberta:

Camrose Alberta Service Centre
3rd Flr., Gemini Centre, 6708 - 48 Ave.
Ph. (780) 608-2525

Drayton Valley Sub-Office
2nd Floor Provincial Building
5136 - 51 Ave. Ph. (780) 542-3134

Olds Alberta Service Centre
4905 - 50 Ave. Ph. (403) 507-8060

Red Deer Canada-Alberta Service Centre
2nd Floor First Red Deer Place, 4911 - 51 St.
Ph. (403) 340-5353

Rocky Mountain House Alberta Service Centre, 4919 - 51 St. Ph. (403) 845-8590

Stettler Alberta Service Centre
4835 - 50 St. Ph. (403) 742-7586

Wetaskiwin Alberta Service Centre
1st Floor Macadil Building
5201 - 51 Ave. Ph. (780) 361 1272

Lloydminster LMIC
5016 - 48 St. Ph. (780) 871-6445

Wainwright LMIC
810 - 14 Ave. Ph. (780) 842-7500

Vermilion LMIC
4701 - 52 St. Ph. (780) 853-8164